



News from Council District Two



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King County
Council Chair
Cynthia Sullivan
District Two**

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Winter 2002/2003

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

There is much good news to share with you as we begin 2003.

Inside this newsletter, you will find information related to the County budget, election system reforms, environmental education and restoration, the parks transition plan, regional transportation issues, and more.

I have enjoyed working closely with citizens and a broad range of organizations based in Council District Two, including neighborhood councils, food banks, homeless shelters, senior centers and open space/parks organizations on local issues that effect us all.

Making King County work better and more efficiently for the people I serve has always been my top priority; but I can't do it without your guidance.

Please take few minutes to read through this newsletter and call, write or email me with your comments or questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes for a peaceful New Year.

*Cedar Park – Fremont – Green Lake – Hawthorne Hills – Inverness – Lake City
Laurelhurst – Licton Springs – Maple Leaf – Matthews Beach – Meridian – Northgate
Pinehurst – Ravenna-Bryant – Roosevelt – Sand Point – Thornton Creek – University
Victory Heights – View Ridge – Wallingford – Wedgwood – Windermere*

2003 Budget: Reducing Government and Protecting Critical Services

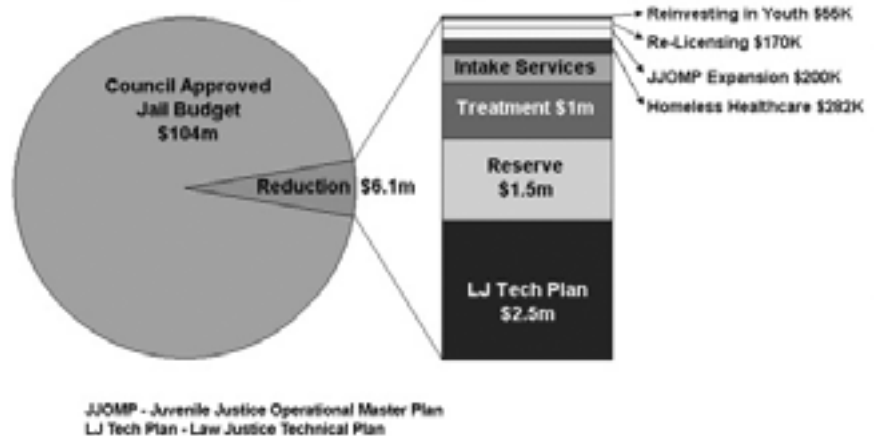
For the 2003 budget, King County faced a structural gap of \$53 million between revenues and expenses. In a process praised by many to be the most effective in recent memory, the County Council successfully adopted a budget with a final vote of 12 to 1.

The spending plan reduces the size of county government. Health and human service programs that faced significant cuts had their funding restored by \$3.3 million (to \$16 million). New proactive policy initiatives included:

- Adoption of a new entrepreneurial blueprint for county parks and pools (see page 3).
- Creation of a new Cultural Development Authority that moves arts and cultural resources programs out of the general fund to a more stable funding base.
- Adoption of the Adult Justice Operational Master Plan and other reforms to create lower cost alternatives to jail and reduce recidivism through drug treatment, while preserving public safety.

"For the first time in a long time we have a council where everyone was dedicated to finding solutions," said Council Chair Cynthia Sullivan.

Jail Savings in Council Approved 2003 Budget



EDITORIALS & OPINION

Wednesday, December 11, 2002
Guest columnist

Ensuring a well-run election

By Cynthia Sullivan
Special to The Times

Read Cynthia's editorial at:
www.seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/editorial/sopin/134593271_cynthia11/html

Sullivan calls for professional management of King County Elections

In response to the late distribution of absentee ballots for the November 2002 general election, Council chair Cynthia Sullivan introduced an ordinance calling for Council confirmation of the division's top two posts.

"The best way to restore public confidence in King County elections is to install managers with the best professional qualifications, not the best political connections," said Council Chair Sullivan.

The proposed ordinance would require Council confirmation of the County Executive's appointees for the Manager of Records and Elections and the Superintendent of Elections.

"This legislation will give voters what they expect: an office run by professionals in charge of distributing and tabulating votes in King County," said Sullivan.

Like many of you, I did not receive my 2002 absentee ballot on time. In response to your calls and emails, I sponsored legislation calling for new oversight of our elections.

King County and Suburban Cities Team Up to Keep Parks and Pools Open

In early 2002, the King County parks division was faced with trimming \$10 million from its 2003 budget in response to a \$53 million County budget shortfall. This challenge led to a fundamental refocusing and reprioritization of the division's mission and goals, including:

- Focusing on regional recreation assets, such as Marymoor Park and the Burke Gilman Trail
- Prioritizing recreation resources in unincorporated areas where King County acts as local government.
- Generating new revenue and savings by pursuing a broad range of new ways of doing business.
- Broadening stewardship of resource and ecological lands.

As part of its goal to focus on regional assets and limit its local park and recreation role, King County undertook unprecedented collaboration with suburban cities to keep park facilities open and accessible to the general public and non-profit organizations. King County was able to divest itself of or enter into operating agreements for 21 facilities in 17 cities for annual savings to the County of approximately \$4 million.

Parks and pools in King County continue to be available to people throughout the region, but the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of these facilities now belongs to the communities in which they're located, just as Seattle's parks and pool have been managed.

At the end of 2002 the Metropolitan King County Council approved the transfers and operating agreements. As part of its efforts, the county was also able to enter into unique partnerships with the Boys and Girls Clubs and the Northwest Center. Funding originally earmarked for mothballing pools now becomes seed money to help the new owners get off to a strong start.

For more information, please contact my council office.

King County - A Resource for Your Yard and Garden

Visit www.dnr.metrokc.gov/topics/yard-and-garden/index.htm to learn more about:

Northwest Native Plants

Replace your lawn with native plants and sign up for hands-on Naturescaping workshops. Call: 206-296-1923.

Hazardous Wastemobile

Dispose of garden chemical waste properly and use safer alternatives to toxic garden and household chemicals. Call: 206-296-4692.

Healthy Soil

Get practical tips on using compost and worm bins and learn about GroCo compost derived from King County's biosolids. Call: 206-205-3100 or 206-296-4466.

Noxious Weeds

Learn to identify and combat invasive exotic plants that can overwhelm natives, degrade habitat for wildlife, or burn your skin. Call: 206-296-0290.

Safer Gardening and Pest Control

Consider a safer approach to insecticides and learn some clever, time-tested tricks of ecologically-friendly gardening. Call: 206-205-3100.

Rain Barrels

Set up rain barrels to water your plants while reducing your water bill.

Natural Lawn Care

Save money and time with grasscycling, fertilizing and watering methods. Call: 206-633-0224.

EarthCorps:

Restoring North Seattle's Natural Habitat

In 2003, EarthCorps will celebrate its tenth anniversary and mark the eighth year of its successful partnership with King County.



Eight years ago, Council Chair Cynthia Sullivan co-founded the King County World Conservation Corps to bring young people aged 18-24 from King County together with their peers from around the world to learn about and restore King County's native environment with projects such as urban forestry, salmon habitat restoration, IvyOUT and native plant nurseries.



Council chair Cynthia Sullivan with EarthCorps Youth Volunteers

Over the past year, more than 8,000 community and youth volunteers contributed over 100,000 hours of service. Several of these projects took place in our local neighborhoods, including...

2002 SULLIVAN AWARD

Each year EarthCorps honors an individual or organization that advocates for and supports environmental stewardship in King County.

This award is named in honor of King County Council Chair Cynthia Sullivan for her vision as co-founder of EarthCorps and her leadership and commitment to preserving and restoring our local environment.

*EarthCorps Recognizes **Doug Schindler**, President of the Washington Trails Association and Field Director of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust as the 2002 Sullivan Award recipient in recognition of his outstanding efforts to engage the youth and citizens of our region in preserving and restoring our open spaces.*



Licton Springs Wetland Restoration

In February 2002, EarthCorps crews joined the restoration work efforts at a North Seattle park that includes four acres of forested wetlands, streams and natural mineral springs.

After removing invasive plants, crews installed planting hummocks with native species to mimic the natural processes of a wetland forest. As the coniferous trees become established they will eventually shade out the blackberry and reed canary grass. Two hundred trees, shrubs and emergent species were planted.

Thornton Creek Park 6 Wetland Restoration

EarthCorps crews removed invasive species from the wetland adjacent to Thornton Creek (8th Ave NE and NE 106th) in August as part of a Youth Training Program sponsored by Seattle Public Utilities.

Thornton Creek Alliance had planted trees at this site eight years prior and some of these existing 15' tall western red cedars were completely covered with morning glory and western clematis. The crews exposed the native species hiding under the cover of the invasive plants.

In early November the crews planted the wetland with a mix of about 1000 plants they had selected after studying the site in August. In addition, this project was a valuable opportunity to learn about site condition surveys, planting plan design and hydrology.

For more information about EarthCorps in King County, please visit www.earthcorps.org.

Transit and Transportation Choices: real alternatives to gridlock

The King, Pierce and Snohomish County Councils are currently meeting to discuss the next step in funding a regional transportation package which could be on the ballot in 2003. The Regional Transportation Improvement District (RTID) process was initiated by the state legislature last year to address the most congested portion of our state.

After the failure of Referendum 51, the message sent by Seattle residents was clear: fixes to our roads and highway system are needed, but any transportation plan must include efforts to create new transit capacity as well.

Regional leaders are tasked with developing a RTID package that supports a broad range of transit and transportation choices, including High Capacity Transit, which many other major metropolitan cities enjoy throughout the country today. We need to concentrate on greater mobility, better air quality, and a broad range of choices that take future population growth into account.

Sound Transit will release its environmental review of alignment, engineering and cost considerations for the University District and Northgate route proposals in early 2003.

The list of routes to be studied in the environmental documents include:



New Tacoma LINK light rail

Northgate segment

- 12th Avenue Tunnel
- Eighth Avenue elevated route with a west portal
- Eighth Avenue elevated route with an east portal

University District segment

- Montlake route
- Portage Bay tunnel
- West Tunnel route

If you would like a map of all proposed routes, please visit www.soundtransit.org.



Cynthia's Transportation Priorities

Along with other Seattle members of the King County Council, I have asked the legislature to improve the bill that created the RTID process, so the bulk of the money generated from future revenues is not sunk into more lanes of pavement on I-405.

Yes, we need to replace the Alaskan Way viaduct and the Evergreen Point Floating bridge in the near future; and yes, some critical access and safety improvements will need to be made as soon as possible. But I hope other elected officials in this state listen to the wisdom of Seattle voters: we can't pave our way out of gridlock, and we'll cause real environmental harm if we try.

My number one priority representing North Seattle on the Sound Transit Board is to urge the board to build light rail to the University District and on to Northgate, and to represent North Seattle neighborhoods in the process of achieving these goals.

I have worked closely with Roosevelt community organizations to ensure the transit planning complements the needs and goals of the neighborhood and business district.

Input from constituents has been instrumental in the planning process - in fact, the cost-effective strategy to cross the ship canal at shallow Montlake came from a citizen who contacted me.

I look forward to the day when many transportation alternatives - busses, light rail, monorail - are available to North Seattle residents, and I encourage you to contact me with your concerns and ideas about transit planning.

District 2 Town Meeting: Keeping Seattle Livable

At a town meeting in the fall co-sponsored by the Northeast District Neighborhoods Council, Council Chair Sullivan and Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels outlined strategies to ensure that Seattle remains the preeminent livable city in our region.

The audience provided excellent comment on issues such as the expansion of the 520 Bridge and the enhancement of Metro transit service. The forum was taped and delivered to a larger audience on the Seattle Channel. Archived video can be viewed at www.seattlechannel.org.



*King County Council Chair Cynthia Sullivan
with Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels*

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